

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT & GEOMATICS
WINTER 2024
GEOG*6091: Geographical Research Methods II

Course Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Silver

Pronouns: she/her

Email: j.silver@uoguelph.ca

One-on-one meetings: by appointment (MS Teams or in-person, pending availability)

Calendar Description: A review of philosophies and research methods in geography. The development and presentation of a research proposal for the thesis or research project.

Prerequisites: GEOG*6090

Land Acknowledgement

The University of Guelph resides on the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. These lands are a gathering place and home to many past, present, and future First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The Dish with One Spoon is an agreement between Hodinöhsö:ni', Anishinaabeg and their allied nations to live peaceably on these lands and those throughout what is now known as the Great Lakes Region. The Dish with One Spoon speaks to interconnectivity and our collective relations with each other and the Earth. Abiding by it means that one should always strive to take only what they need, leave enough for others, and keep the shared dish clean.

Acknowledging the land on which we learn and work recognizes the importance of place-based histories and upholds Indigenous peoples as having been in relation with this place since immemorial. The acknowledgement above is adapted from resource material shared online by the University of Guelph Indigenous Student Centre.

Overview & Outcomes

The purpose of this course is to provide a structured pathway through which first year masters students gain insight on geographic research as a process and develop their own research project proposal. Throughout the semester, students will refine a research question or aim, identify their research objectives and describe their methods, and write and orally present their research proposal. By the end of the semester students should be able to:

- identify and discuss key areas and approaches to geography and in geographical research;
- formulate research aims and/or questions that appropriately reflect their sub-discipline and are reasonable given objectives and intended analytical approach; and,
- effectively and efficiently communicate a research proposal in written and oral form.

Covid-19 and other Airborne Illness

Risks for many people, especially fully vaccinated individuals, have lessened since the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, risks have not disappeared. Reinfection and negative health outcome risks remain elevated for people who are immunocompromised or unable to receive vaccines, those with frequent or intense patterns of exposure, and those with certain types of care-giving or family circumstances/responsibilities.

Wellness in our classroom is a shared responsibility. For University of Guelph policy statements and updates on campus health, including the request that anyone who feels sick stay home, please see: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/healthy-campus/>. **Students are very welcome to wear masks any time we meet together, in groups, or for one-on-one meetings.**

Class Schedule

Day	CLASS MEETING	REQUIRED SUBMISSIONS/ DEADLINES
Jan 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intro to the course • collective brainstorming for Feb. 2 class 	
Jan 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overview: research philosophies and approaches in geography • what are research aims/questions and objectives? how do they relate to methods? 	
Jan 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflecting on the F23 GEOG*6090 data workshops • honing in on methods for data collection, organization, analysis • introducing the W24 'Objectives to Methods Worksheet' 	
Feb 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD based on ideas generated and discussion during our class on Jan 13. Meeting plan and any student responsibilities/ preparations will be shared with class by end of Jan. 22 	
Feb 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one-on-one check in meetings with Jen; scheduled during class time, held over zoom. The purpose of your meeting is to discuss progress on your Objectives to Methods worksheet and the proposal outline. <u>No in-person class.</u> 	
Feb 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning for fieldwork and other forms of data collection • collective brainstorming for Mar. 8 class 	<p>Proposal Outline and Objectives to Methods worksheet due Feb. 16. Email as .doc files to Jen and Supervisor no later than 5pm.</p>

READING WEEK (Feb 19-23)

Mar 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • senior grad student panel: PhD Candidate Bárbara López-González, MSc student Kayla Wicks, MSc student David Pashinsky • overview and tips for proposal presentations 	
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Mar 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD based on ideas generated and discussion during our class on Feb. 16. Meeting plan and any student responsibilities/ preparations will be shared with class by end of Jan. 22 	Proposal draft submission window opens Mar 8. Email full draft as .doc file to Jen & Supervisor no later than 5pm on Mar 22.
Mar 15	Research Proposal Presentations (1:30-3:30)	
Mar 22	Research Proposal Presentations (1:30-3:30)	
Mar 29	Statutory Holiday – All University Classes Cancelled	
Apr 5	Research Proposal Presentations (1:30-3:00)	
MON., Apr 8	Open office hours – Jen will be in Hutt 237 for any final proposal-related questions. <u>No in-person class.</u>	Final proposals due Fri., Apr 15. Email as .doc or PDF file to Jen & Supervisor no later than 5pm.

Evaluation

Your final course grade will be determined by Jen in consultation with your supervisor/committee. The evaluation will consider the oral presentation (25% as evaluated by all faculty in attendance at your presentation) and final research proposal (75% as evaluated by supervisor, the course instructor, and where deemed appropriate by the supervisor, one or more committee members). Class attendance and participation are expected and will be taken into account; unannounced and/or repeat absence from class will be communicated to the supervisor and discussed in terms of whether they should impact your final grade.

To keep your progress on track, a series of non-negotiable deadlines are scheduled throughout the semester. They are as follows:

- **February 16:** Proposal Outline and Objectives to Methods worksheet (email both as .doc files to Jen and Supervisor by 5pm)
- **March 8-22:** Full draft of proposal (email as .doc file to Jen and Supervisor). You are welcome to submit at your convenience during this window, but no later than 5pm, March 20. Jen will review drafts and return feedback in the order that they are received; students should discuss anticipated turnaround times with their supervisors.
- **March 15, 22, & April 5:** Proposal presentations scheduled according to supervisor/committee availability and taking order from last semester into account. All GEOG*6091 students expected to attend each other's proposal presentations.
- **April 15:** Final copies of research proposal (email as .doc or PDF file to Jen and Supervisor by 5pm).

Guidelines: written proposal

The written thesis research proposal will:

- Briefly contextualize and define the area/problem to be studied;
- Articulate how you will approach this area/problem through a research question;
- Identify the broad aim and specific objectives of the research that will address this question;
- Describe the particular approach to the research (data sources, methods of data collection, methods of analysis, etc.) to enable completion of the objectives; and,
- Identify the expected scholarly and practical contributions of the research, including the timeline that will be followed.

Length: 4,000 - 5,000 words + any figure titles and bibliography. Options regarding structure, style, and other content-related topics will be detailed and discussed in class.

Guidelines: proposal presentation

The presentation will be a maximum of 20 minutes (and no less than 17). An additional 5-10 minutes will be allowed for audience questions, discussion, and suggestions.

Options regarding structure, style, and other content-related topics will be detailed and discussed in class. Remember, most of the people will not have seen your proposal, so clear organization and visuals will help to communicate your points efficiently and effectively. Ultimately, the objective is for you to rationalize your research and research approach and for the audience to ask questions that will help to extend your thinking, to raise possible limitations, and to make suggestions that will improve the potential of your proposed study.

Instructor's Course Policies

Attendance. Attendance at all class meetings as scheduled in the syllabus is mandatory; please raise any prospective absences with Jen in person or over phone at least one week in advance. Absences related to illness or other unexpected personal circumstances should be raised with Jen as soon as is feasible. Absences that go unannounced or unaccounted for will be communicated to the student's supervisor and a decision will be made about whether they will result in deductions from the student's final grade.

Video and Audio Recordings. Slides and any video/audio content developed for this course are the intellectual property of the person or group(s) that develop them. Students are welcome to cite them in assignments and discuss them with classmates and other students. However, slides and any video/audio content developed for this course are not intended for circulation outside of the course and students should not permanently save, post or publicly share content that does not belong to them.

Academic Integrity. Students are expected to undertake this course with honesty and integrity, and to understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Refer to the Academic Calendar and the university policies below. If you still have uncertainty about how to avoid plagiarism, complete the U of G tutorial (see: academicintegrity.uoguelph.ca/) and/or speak with the instructor or library resource-persons for guidance. Plagiarism and other types of misconduct will not be tolerated; any instances will be treated seriously and are likely to be referred on to the Associate Dean Academic of the College.

Communication. Please check your university email account and the 'news' section of the Courselink page frequently (ideally at least once every 1-2 days). Any important information arising throughout the semester will be communicated by these means and the university mandates that students must check them. The instructor and TA will do their best to respond to emails within 2 business days. Emails received after 3pm on Friday will not be responded to until at least the following Monday, and questions that are answered in course documents will receive short replies only (i.e., see course syllabus). Please use proper punctuation and professional language when emailing the instructor or TA.

University Course Policies

Email Communication. As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement. When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

Drop Date. Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses are available in the Graduate Calendar.

Copies of Out-Of-Class Assignments. Keep reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility. The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student. When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 14 days in advance, and no later than November 1 (fall), March 1 (winter) or July 1 (summer). Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time.

More information: www.uoguelph.ca/sas

Academic Misconduct. The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is outlined in the Graduate Calendar.

Recording of Materials. Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources. The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

Illness. Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).